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SOME WAR MEMORANDA—JOTTED DOWN AT THE TIME.

I FIND this incident in my notes (I suppose from “chinning” in hospital with some sick or wounded soldier who knew of it) :

When Kilpatrick and his forces were cut off at Brandy Station (last of September, '63, or thereabouts), and the bands struck up “Yankee Doodle” there were not cannon enough in the Southern Confederacy to keep him and them “in.” It was when Meade fell back. K. had his cavalry division (perhaps 5,000 men), and the rebs, in superior force, had surrounded them. Things looked exceedingly desperate. K. had two fine bands, and ordered them up immediately ; they joined and played “Yankee Doodle” with a will. It went through the men like lightning—but to inspire, not to unnerve. Every man seemed a giant. They charged like a cyclone, and cut their way out. Their loss was but 20. It was about two in the afternoon.

WASHINGTON STREET SCENES.

April 7, 1864.—WALKING DOWN PENNSYLVANIA AVENUE. —Warmish forenoon after the storm of the past few days. I see, passing up, in the broad space between the curbs, a big squad of a couple of hundred conscripts, surrounded by a strong cordon of armed guards, and others interspersed between the ranks. The government has learned caution from its experiences ; there are many hundreds of “bounty jumpers,” and already, as I am told, eighty thousand deserters ! Next (also passing up the avenue), a cavalry company, young, but evidently well drilled and service-hardened men. Mark the upright posture in their saddles, the bronzed and bearded young faces, the easy swaying to the motions of the horses, and the carbines by their right knees ; handsome and reckless, some eighty of them, riding with rapid gait, clattering along. Then the tinkling bells of passing cars, the many

shops (some with large show-windows, some with swords, straps for the shoulders of different ranks, hat-cords with acorns, or other insignia), the military patrol marching along, with the orderly or second-lieutenant stopping different ones to examine passes—the forms, the faces, all sorts crowded together, the worn and pale, the pleased, some on their way to the railroad depot going home, the cripples, the darkeys, the long trains of government wagons, or the sad strings of ambulances conveying wounded—the many officers' horses tied in front of the drinking or oyster saloons, or held by black men or boys, or orderlies.

THE 195TH PENNSYLVANIA.

Tuesday, Aug. 1, 1865.—About 3 o'clock this afternoon (sun broiling hot) in Fifteenth street, by the Treasury building, a large and handsome regiment, 195th Pennsylvania, were marching by—as it happened, received orders just here to halt and break ranks, so that they might rest themselves awhile. I thought I never saw a finer set of men—so hardy, candid, bright American looks, all weather-beaten, and with warm clothes. Every man was home-born. My heart was much drawn toward them. They seemed very tired, red, and streaming with sweat. It is a one-year regiment, mostly from Lancaster County, Pa.; have been in Shenandoah Valley. On halting, the men unhitched their knapsacks, and sat down to rest themselves. Some lay flat on the pavement or under trees. The fine physical appearance of the whole body was remarkable. Great, very great, must be the State where such young farmers and mechanics are the practical average. I went around for half an hour and talked with several of them, sometimes squatting down with the groups.

LEFT-HAND WRITING BY SOLDIERS.

April 30, 1866.—Here is a single significant fact, from which one may judge of the character of the American soldiers in this just concluded war: A gentleman in New York City, a while since, took it into his head to collect specimens of writing from soldiers who had lost their right hands in battle, and afterwards learned to use the left. He gave public notice of his desire, and offered prizes for the best of these specimens. Pretty soon they began to come in, and by the time specified for awarding the prizes three hundred samples of such left-hand writing by maimed soldiers had arrived.

I have just been looking over some of this writing. A great

many of the specimens are written in a beautiful manner. All are good. The writing in nearly all cases slants backward instead of forward. One piece of writing, from a soldier who had lost both arms, was made by holding the pen in his mouth.

CENTRAL VIRGINIA IN '64.

Culpeper, where I am stopping, looks like a place of two or three thousand inhabitants. Must be one of the pleasantest towns in Virginia. Even now, dilapidated fences, all broken down, windows out, it has the remains of much beauty. I am standing on an eminence overlooking the town, though within its limits. To the west the long Blue Mountain range is very plain, looks quite near, though from 30 to 50 miles distant, with some gray splashes of snow yet visible. The show is varied and fascinating. I see a great eagle up there in the air sailing with poised wings, quite low. Squads of red-legged soldiers are drilling; I suppose some of the new men of the Brooklyn 14th; they march off presently with muskets on their shoulders. In another place, just below me, are some soldiers squaring off logs to build a shanty—chopping away, and the noise of the axes sounding good. I hear the bellying, unmusical screech of the mule. I mark the thin blue smoke rising from camp fires. Just below me is a collection of hospital tents, with a yellow flag elevated on a stick, and moving languidly in the breeze. Two discharged men (I know them both) are just leaving. One is so weak he can hardly walk; the other is stronger, and carries his comrade's musket. They move slowly along the muddy road toward the depot. The scenery is full of breadth, and spread on the most generous scale (everywhere in Virginia this thought filled me). The sights, the scenes, the groups, have been varied and picturesque here beyond description, and remain so.

I heard the men return in force the other night—heard the shouting, and got up and went out to hear what was the matter. That night scene of so many hundred tramping steadily by, through the mud (some big flaring torches of pine knots), I shall never forget. I like to go to the paymaster's tent, and watch the men getting paid off. Some have furloughs, and start at once for home, sometimes amid great chaffing and blarneying. There is every day the sound of the wood-chopping axe, and the plentiful sight of negroes, crows, and mud. I note large droves and pens of cattle. The teamsters have camps of their own, and I go often

among them. The officers occasionally invite me to dinner or supper at headquarters. The fare is plain, but you get something good to drink, and plenty of it. Gen. Meade is absent ; Sedgwick is in command.

PAYING THE 1ST U. S. C. T.

One of my war time reminiscences comprises the quiet side scene of a visit I made to the First Regiment U. S. colored troops, at their encampment, and on the occasion of their first paying off, July 11, 1863. Though there is now no difference of opinion worth mentioning, there was a powerful opposition to enlisting blacks during the earlier years of the secession war. Even then, however, they had their champions. "That the colored race," said a good authority, "is capable of military training and efficiency, is demonstrated by the testimony of numberless witnesses, and by the eagerness displayed in the raising, organizing, and drilling of African troops. Few white regiments make a better appearance on parade than the First and Second Louisiana Native Guards. The same remark is true of other colored regiments. At Milliken's Bend, at Vicksburg, at Port Hudson, on Morris Island, and wherever tested, they have exhibited determined bravery, and compelled the plaudits alike of the thoughtful and thoughtless soldiery. During the siege of Port Hudson the question was often asked those who beheld their resolute charges, how the 'niggers' behaved under fire, and without exception the answer was complimentary to them. 'O, tip-top !' 'first-rate !' 'bully !' were the usual replies." But I did not start out to argue the case—only to give my reminiscence literally, as jotted on the spot at the time.

I write this on Mason's (otherwise Analostan) island, under the fine shade trees of an old white stucco house, with big rooms ; the white stucco house, originally a fine country seat (tradition says the famous Virginia Mason, author of the Fugitive Slave Law, was born here). I reached the spot from my Washington quarters by ambulance up Pennsylvania avenue, through Georgetown, across the Aqueduct bridge, and around through a cut and winding road, with rocks and many bad gullies not lacking. After reaching the Island, we get presently in the midst of the camp of the 1st Regiment U. S. C. T. The tents look clean and good ; indeed, altogether, in locality especially, the pleasantest camp I have yet seen. The spot is umbrageous, high and dry, with distant sounds of the city, and the puffing steamers of the Potomac,

up to Georgetown and back again. Birds are singing in the trees, the warmth is endurable here in this moist shade, with the fragrance and freshness. A hundred rods across is Georgetown. The river between is swelled and muddy from the late rains up country. So quiet here, yet full of vitality, all around in the far distance glimpses, as I sweep my eye, of hills, verdure-clad, and with plenteous trees ; right where I sit, locust, sassafras, spice, and many other trees, a few with huge parasitic vines ; just at hand the banks sloping to the river, wild with beautiful, free vegetation, superb weeds, better, in their natural growth and forms, than the best garden. Lots of luxuriant grape vines and trumpet flowers ; the river flowing far down in the distance.

Now the paying is to begin. The Major (paymaster) with his clerk seat themselves at a table—the rolls are before them—the money box is opened—there are packages of five, ten, twenty-five cent pieces. Here comes the first Company (B), some 82 men, all blacks. Certes, we cannot find fault with the appearance of this crowd—negroes though they be. They are manly enough, bright enough, look as if they had the soldier-stuff in them, look hardy, patient, many of them real handsome young fellows. The paying, I say, has begun. The men are marched up in close proximity. The clerk calls off name after name, and each walks up, receives his money, and passes along out of the way. It is a real study, both to see them come close, and to see them pass away, stand counting their cash—(nearly all of this company get ten dollars and three cents each). The clerk calls George Washington. That distinguished personage steps from the ranks, in the shape of a very black man, good sized and shaped, and aged about 30, with a military moustache ; he takes his “ten three,” and goes off evidently well pleased. (There are about a dozen Washingtons in the company. Let us hope they will do honor to the name.) At the table, how quickly the Major handles the bills, counts without trouble, everything going on smoothly and quickly. The regiment numbers to-day about 1,000 men (including 20 officers, the only whites.)

Now another company. These get \$5.36 each. The men look well. They, too, have great names ; besides the Washingtons aforesaid, John Quincy Adams, Daniel Webster, Calhoun, James Madison, Alfred Tennyson, John Brown, Benj. G. Tucker, Horace Greeley, etc. The men step off aside, count their money

with a pleased, half-puzzled look. Occasionally, but not often, there are some thoroughly African physiognomies, very black in color, large, protruding lips, low forehead, etc. But I have to say that I do not see one utterly revolting face.

Then another company, each man of this getting \$10.03 also. The pay proceeds very rapidly (the calculation, roll-signing, etc., having been arranged before hand). Then some trouble. One company, by the rigid rules of official computation, gets only 23 cents each man. The company (K) is indignant, and after two or three are paid, the refusal to take the paltry sum is universal, and the company marches off to quarters unpaid.

Another company (I) gets only 70 cents. The sullen, lowering, disappointed look is general. Half refuse it in this case. Company G, in full dress, with brass scales on shoulders, looked, perhaps, as well as any of the companies—the men had an unusually alert look.

These, then, are the black troops,—or the beginning of them. Well, no one can see them, even under these circumstances—their military career in its novitiate—without feeling well pleased with them.

As we entered the island, we saw scores at a little distance, bathing, washing their clothes, etc. The officers, as far as looks go, have a fine appearance, have good faces, and the air military. Altogether it is a significant show, and brings up some “abolition” thoughts. The scene, the porch of an old Virginia slave-owner’s house, the Potomac rippling near, the Capitol just down three or four miles there, seen through the pleasant blue haze of this July day.

After a couple of hours I get tired, and go off for a ramble. I write these concluding lines on a rock, under the shade of a tree on the banks of the island. It is solitary here, the birds singing, the sluggish muddy-yellow waters pouring down from the late rains of the upper Potomac, the green heights on the south side of the river before me. The single cannon from a neighboring fort has just been fired, to signal high noon. I have walked all around Analostan, enjoying its luxuriant wildness, and stopped in this solitary spot. A water snake wriggles down the bank, disturbed, into the water. The bank near by is fringed with a dense growth of shrubbery, vines, etc.

WALT WHITMAN.